

REMARKS

The applicant provides the following remarks which address each concern raised by the office in the second communication mailed June 16, 2005.

Request For Continued Examination. The applicant has filed along with this Response and Request For Reconsideration Under 37 C.F.R. §1.116 a Request For Continued Examination Under 37 C.F.R. §1.114 and respectfully requests approval and entry of the amendments to the claims as set forth above and continued prosecution of the application.

Request For Telephonic Conference. The applicant specifically requests a telephonic conference to address any remaining concerns of the examiner.

Cancellation of Claims. The applicant by Preliminary Amendment cancelled claims 1-68 and in applicant's response to the first official action claims 73-78 were cancelled, each cancellation of claims without prejudice. The applicant does not waive any right to have these canceled claims, or other claims supported by the description, whether of lesser or greater breadth, examined in subsequently filed continuation, division, continuation-in-part, or similar continuing applications.

Section 102 Concerns. The office has raised novelty concerns with respect to claims 69-71, 79-81, 82/80, 84 and 85 as anticipated by United States Patent No. 4,825,515 to Wolterstorff, Jr. ("Worterstorff"). A claim is anticipated only if "each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference." *Verdegaal Bros. v. Union Oil Co. of California*, 814 F.2d 628, 631 (Fed. Cir. 1987); *MPEP* 2131. "The identical invention must be shown in as complete detail as is contained. . . in the claim." *Richardson v. Suzuki Motor Co.*, 868 F.2d 1225, 1236 (Fed. Cir. 1989).

Claim 69. The invention of claim 1 as amended can be differentiated from the Woterstorff reference by both elements a. and b. Element a. recites a first hanger body having a front surface and a back surface which terminate in a first hanger body edge which

establishes a beveled surface. See Figure 1 of the instant application showing terminal “beveled surface (5)”. As can be understood from the diagram provided in official action at page 2, the “one portion” described by Wolterstorff (Col. 1, l. 61) does not have a front surface and a back surface which terminate in “a beveled surface”. Wolterstorff provides a “portion” and “another portion” having front and back surfaces that do not terminate at an edge having a beveled surface. Rather, Wolterstorff indicates that a “flexible safety latching arm” (which the office refers to in the diagram as including the beveled surface) is “attached to one of the portions”. That is neither portion has a front surface and a back surface which terminate to provide a beveled surface; rather, the beveled surface is only afforded as part of a “safety latch” which extends from the “portion” (or hanger body). Note also that the diagram in the office action indicates a “beveled surface” which is not a terminal surface, but is only proximate to a terminal surface. The Wolterstorff connector being inoperable if the “latching hook” surface indicated in the diagram as the “beveled surface” were a terminal surface.

Because the Wolterstorff connector does not include a front surface and a back surface which terminate in an edge having a beveled surface as defined by the invention the invention of claim 1 is not anticipated by Wolterstorff.

Additionally, element b. as amended in part recites “wherein each of said pair of lock member engagement elements provides an external surface configured to generate outward flexure of a corresponding one each of said pair of lock members upon sliding engagement, and wherein each of said pair of lock members travel inwardly to establish locked securement of said first hanger body to said second hanger body in opposed mated relation”.

The office has identified the internal side walls of the “dimensionally corresponding receptacle” of the “other portion” element 20 of the Wolterstorff reference as corresponding to the above-mentioned limitation. See Wolterstorff at Col. 1, ll. 63-64 and Office Action Page 3 (“wherein a pair of lock member engagement elements (above, both sides of hanger body)”). However, the Wolterstorff reference specifically states that “the latching arms which are designed to be inserted into [the] dimensionally corresponding receptacle of the

other portion..have a tab attached to their leading edge. The tabs permit a slight flexing to facilitate insertion. When the arms are fully inserted, the tabs protrude into openings formed in the other portion permitting outward flexing of the lateral latching arms engaging the portions.”

As can be understood from the specification starting on page 22, l. 11 and Figures 24-26, Worterstorff does not teach the “pair of lock member engagement elements” as recited by claim 1 (as amended to clarify this point of differentiation). Figures 24-26 show the “pair of lock member engagement elements (36)” coupled to opposed ends of the “second hanger body (34)” each of which provide an external surface configured to generate outward “flexure at a necessary, predetermined or desired rate or amount in the resiliently flexible projection (37) causing the catch element (38) to travel from the first location or resting configuration (shown in Figure 25a) of the resiliently flexible projection(s)(37) to the second location as the first lockable hanger body (33) is operably mated with the second lockable hanger body (35).” This entirely unlike the internal side walls of the “receptacle” described by Worterstoff, which generate inward flexure of a pair of latching arms as the latching arms are inserted inside the “receptacle” (20).

Moreover, as recited by claim 1 (as amended) the “pair of lock members travel inwardly to establish locked securement of said first hanger body to said second hanger body in opposed mated relation.” This action generated by the configuration of the “pair of lock member engagement elements” of the invention is entirely unlike the action generated by the side walls of the “receptacle” described by the Worterstoff reference which “permit outward flexing of the latching arms engaging the portions”. See Worterstoff at Col. 1, l. 68 and Col. 2, l. 1.

Because the Wolterstoff reference does not teach the “pair of lock member engagement elements [which provide] an external surface configured to generate outward flexure of a corresponding one each of said pair of lock members upon sliding engagement” the invention of claim 1 cannot be anticipated by Wolterstorff.

Claims 68-71, 79-81, 82/80, 84, and 85. Claims 68-71, 79-81, 82/80, 84, and 85 ultimately depend from Claim 1 which as amended the applicant believes do not anticipate Wolterstorff. Claims which depend from a claim which does not anticipate the Worterstorff reference also do not anticipate Worterstorff.

Allowable Subject Matter. The office found claims 72, 82/81 and 83 allowable subject to being rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. However, based on the references cited by the office, the applicant believes the fair breadth of the invention is broader than would be afforded by any of the above mentioned claims as rewritten. As such, the applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of claim 1 as amended and a telephonic conference with the examiner to resolve any further concerns in regard to allowability of the invention as claimed.

CONCLUSION

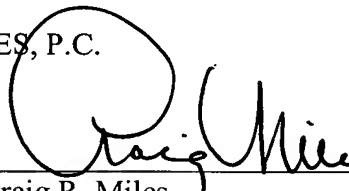
The applicant has canceled claims 1-68 and 73-78 without prejudice and reconsideration of claims 69-72 and claims 79-85 in view of the amendments presented.

Dated this 14 day of December, 2005

Respectfully Submitted,

CR MILES, P.C.

By:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Craig Miles", is written over a horizontal line.

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